

City of San Diego  
COUNCILMEMBER JIM MADAFFER  
DISTRICT SEVEN

M E M O R A N D U M

**M02-09-07**                    *Please refer to this number when responding to this memo*

**DATE:**                    September 16, 2002

**TO:**                    Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers

**FROM:**                Councilmember Jim Madaffer

**SUBJECT:**            Red Light Photo Enforcement Program

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I support the concept of using red light cameras provided that they are used to promote safety and not to promote revenue. While the recommendations made in the City Manager's Report dated September 11, 2002 are a step in the right direction, I believe it falls short of the steps we need to take. I have serious concerns over the credibility and public perception of the City's red light photo enforcement program and until these concerns are addressed, I would urge against reinstating the red light photo enforcement program for San Diego.

Several adjustments should be made before the red light camera system can be considered equitable, reliable and truly deserving of the public's confidence.

My key concerns are as follows:

1) Timing of the yellow lights must be increased to a minimum of 4.0 seconds at all red light photo enforcement intersections. This is in addition to the 0.5 second grace period offered in the red light phase. In fact, I support the concept of increasing the yellow light time to at least 4.0 seconds at all intersections that have a traffic light regardless if there is a red light camera.

2) That no additional red light cameras be installed at additional locations besides the current 19 photo enforcement intersections unless the public has adequate input. A traffic safety issue such as this should not be left to the vendor who has financial incentive to increase the number of photo enforcement intersections in the City. This should not be left for a bureaucratic decision but should instead have public input.

3) That the vendor's access to the Department of Motor Vehicle's private and confidential records on individual citizens be denied. It is a privacy violation and the public may not have confidence in the program knowing that the vendor has access to DMV information. I recommend that the San Diego Police Department designate personnel to access DMV records. If, however, the program is reinstated with vendor personnel instead of Police Department personnel accessing DMV records, then we need to have sanctions in place in

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case vendor personnel unlawfully access or use private information. These sanctions should include severe financial penalties as well as terminating the vendor's contract with the City.

At the heart of the matter is public confidence in the red light photo enforcement program. We need to be able to assure the public that it is accurate, fair and used to for the public's safety.

I urge the Council to keep the red light cameras turned off until the City Manger and staff incorporate the above three points into the City's red light photo enforcement program.

JM:lw